

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SOLID WASTE ACTIVITIES

September 13, 2005

5:15 PM

Chairman Roy called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Guinta, Thibault, Forest, O'Neil

Absent: K. Sheppard, T. Arnold, J. McLaughlin

Chairman Roy addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Proposed Solid Waste Compliance Officer position.

Kevin Sheppard, Deputy Public Works Director, stated this is a position that we have long asked for in our budgets. Right now we have two employees or sometimes three employees that share the responsibility of trying to enforce the City's trash ordinances. We don't feel we have been too successful. These employees have other duties, i.e. overseeing the Refuse Division on a daily basis. I believe that as part of the Mayor's walk through of the neighborhoods in the City some of the Aldermen realized the amount of trash that sits at the curbside piled up and we feel that there is a need for a full-time person to enforce these regulations within the City. It is not just piles of trash. There are other ordinances within the City. For example, anything, I believe above three units, requires toters – an adequate amount of toters for all of their trash. If you drive through the alleys you don't see that. There are a lot of non-compliant properties in the City and on top of that we see this person as also educating the public and a lot of the larger property owners in the City as to our ordinances to try to bring them into compliance.

Alderman Thibault stated I agree with this position to some extent but I do have a problem with absentee landlords of major complexes with 9, 12 or 15 apartments. It would seem to me that if the ordinance specified that the owner of a building...if someone is moving they must notify Highway that there might be mattresses, bureaus or whatever else that comes out of an apartment. This is what is happening in my area and that is why I am concerned about it. People are moving out of major apartment buildings and they don't tell the owner anything but they leave two rooms of furniture out in the backyard as they move.

Mr. Sheppard responded right and that is part of the education process that I am talking about. I think we need to get to the property owners. The absentee landlords that live in other states typically will hire a management company. That landlord never knows if there are issues at that building. We try to contact the property owner, not the management company. As far as things being left at the curb, typically I would think that the property owner or the management company knows when people are moving out of their units so they should be watching and that, again, is part of the education process. Talking to these property owners and talking to these management companies and letting them know that these are the ordinances and we will be enforcing them and where to call and who to call for different issues.

Alderman Thibault replied it would seem to me that if a landlord has not told the City that someone is moving from this building and you have to go or somebody has to go there and fight them, then we should fine this person so next time this doesn't happen again.

Mr. Sheppard responded well the current ordinances do allow us to fine the first citation as \$100. Typically we will try to call the property owner by phone to try to get it resolved as soon as possible. If that doesn't work, the first fine is \$100, the second fine is \$200 and the third is \$300. I know my boss, Frank Thomas, has mentioned to the HR Committee that as part of this whole program we will potentially take a look at increasing those fines so it will actually hit home and people will realize that they cannot be doing this.

Alderman Thibault asked and that is going right to the owner right.

Mr. Sheppard answered correct.

Alderman Forest stated I have more of a comment than anything else on this position. This is one position that this Committee worked on for awhile and recommended it for a long-term position although it is being moved ahead at the request of Alderman Osborne and I sort of agree with it. I know there was an article in the paper this week, whether it was today or yesterday that this position shouldn't be filled because of the amount of money it is going to cost. Maybe the Police Department should be enforcing this and everything else but I think personally that this position is more than just summonses. It is to educate the public, the landlords and the businesses about the garbage and the yard waste and whatever they leave around their property and everything else. It is more than just summonses but if there are summonses that are going to be issued I think the gentleman or the lady who takes this position is going to more than justify the salary that they are going to get and I am in favor of this position.

Alderman Guinta stated I see the salary grade. What is the amount of that salary grade?

Mr. Sheppard responded the yearly rate with benefits I believe is \$41,800. If someone internally qualifies for the position with seniority they would probably come in a little higher on the pay scale.

Alderman Guinta asked so the highest it could go is what.

Mr. Sheppard answered there is 3% in between steps and there are 12 steps.

Alderman Guinta asked so it would be closer to \$50,000.

Mr. Sheppard answered yes.

Alderman Guinta asked do we have an idea of how many absentee landlords we have in the City. I don't know how we define an absentee landlord. I assume it is somebody who lives outside of the City or outside of the State.

Mr. Sheppard answered typically outside the City although we still have issues with landlords who don't live on the property but live within the City.

Alderman Guinta stated that is my next question. How do we determine where the problem rests? If it is with an absentee landlord or if it is with a landlord who owns a building but doesn't particularly pay a lot of attention to it? If it is someone who I am sure we are having problems with owner occupied buildings.

Mr. Sheppard responded we have learned over time where the problems are and I believe what we found out is that it is a lot of the management companies and the larger property owners within the City that are taking advantage of this.

Alderman Guinta asked are we issuing these citations with any regularity.

Mr. Sheppard replied like I said we try to resolve the issue before issuing a citation. We try to get the trash off the curb. I am not...to be quite honest with you I am not too sure how often we issue the citations but if they need to be cited they are cited.

Alderman Guinta asked is the money for this position existing in your budget or is it something that we would have to appropriate.

Mr. Sheppard answered it would have to be appropriated.

Alderman Lopez asked did we provide any information on the existing situation, any statistical data like how many letters have been sent out and how many people have been fined and how much money we collected and stuff like that.

Mr. Sheppard answered we don't get involved...I would say we probably write typically five letters a week. We don't get involved in the collection. That actually goes to Ordinance Violations and they do the collections.

Alderman Lopez responded I am glad you said that. The question of garbage in the City I think is on the minds of everybody and I would only ask that we be careful and check every aspect of this out. We have an Ordinance Violations Division in the City and we have an Ordinance Violation in the City Clerk's Office and then we have the Police Department. I am just wondering if this is the right direction to go in. Only the aspect of about \$60,000 is going to have to come from somebody whether it comes from contingency to move forward or whether it comes from unfilled vacancies in other departments in the City. I am wondering what we are trying to accomplish without any statistical data. In the last year how many citations have you issued or how much money was collected? Maybe this position could be in an Enterprise system and pay for itself instead of being paid for with tax dollars. I just don't have enough facts. I think it needs to be done but what is this guy in the Highway Department going to do. To collect money he is going to have to go to the Ordinance Division. He is going to have to go to the Police Department. He is going to have to go to court. This hasn't been done. We don't have all of the figures.

Mr. Sheppard stated I believe Ordinance Violations is just...I am not comfortable in stating what they do but I believe they are just involved in the collection of the fines. This person like I said is not only going to be education...hopefully it wouldn't be an Enterprise or a self-supporting position because based on education and being out there hopefully we are not going to have to cite a lot of property owners. Obviously in the first year or the first couple of years there are going to be a lot of citations. No this position is probably not going to create a trash free City but hopefully we will get the alleys and streets cleaned up a lot quicker than they are currently.

Alderman Lopez stated I don't know how much education we have to give people when they throw their trash out. It goes in a barrel and they should have enough totes and stuff like that. I am just wondering if we are creating a new position to do something that we can't do either by promoting from within a labor grade or so or have all these other aspects been looked at? That is what I am not comfortable with. I don't have any data before me saying what has been done.

Mr. Sheppard responded well we have tried to do it in house and like I said earlier we do have two people that work on it somewhat part-time as part of their...on top of their regular positions and I think we have come to find out that it is just not working. There is a lot more out there that we are not picking up on, that we don't have the time to get the letters done. Yes an Alderman calls and we will react and follow-up on that property but there are a lot of other properties out there. For every one that we get a call on there are probably another five properties out there that should be cited but we don't have the opportunity to be driving up and down the alleys or up and down the streets looking for violations. In this position, that person's responsibility would be to be out there looking for these violations and sending out letters and contacting property owners.

Alderman Lopez stated I don't want to prolong the Committee but that is my concern. We have these other divisions that do compliance with ordinances and maybe we are just going to reinvent the wheel and I don't know what that is going to accomplish.

Alderman O'Neil stated although I do agree with Alderman Lopez that it would be good to have data, my observation in driving around the City of Manchester is this is a problem and whatever we are doing currently isn't working and it isn't solving the problems. The toters were a step in the right direction but there still is an issue out there. What I heard from some of the ward Aldermen is that they believe in the wards it is a major issue. I think we should move this thing forward. I think we can't keep trying to get the Police to enforce it. It is not going to happen. We can't put it on the Building Department because they aren't going to be able to enforce it. We can't put it on the Fire Department because they aren't going to be able to enforce it. I think we need to have somebody dedicated to this specific problem in the City.

Alderman Guinta asked who is currently writing citations. Is there someone who is doing it?

Mr. Sheppard answered right now the duties are shared with our Refuse Superintendent who oversees the refuse crews on a daily basis and our Assistant Chief of Street Operations. They kind of share the responsibility of doing that. Whoever has the opportunity to check complaints that come in. Like I said we are not out there looking. We are basically reacting to complaints.

Alderman Guinta asked do you have any idea how many citations are being issued a week or a month.

Mr. Sheppard answered I would say...like I said they try to resolve them so possibly a couple a month only because we are resolving them. We do everything

we can to resolve this before a citation is issued so that we can get the streets cleaned. If we don't work with the property owner that trash could sit at the curb for two or three weeks by the time we cite the person and by the time they receive the letter and they get someone to clean it that could be a week or two. So we try to contact the person by phone, talk to them and try to get it cleaned up and most of the time that does work.

Alderman Guinta asked how long does it take to get it done on average.

Mr. Sheppard answered within 3-4 days I would say.

Alderman Guinta asked if we just stepped up that approach you don't think that would solve the problem. The one thing that I am hearing is you are saying you don't want to issue a citation but then you are asking for a Compliance Officer that would be issuing citations. I think there is a disconnect. It seems like your approach is to prefer not to issue a citation because it sounds like that creates an adversarial relationship between the City and...

Mr. Sheppard interjected I apologize if that is what came out. I am not saying we don't want to issue citations but the best way to get these resolved is to work with the property owners and like I said early educating the property owners so we won't have these issues.

Alderman Guinta asked so the Compliance Officer you see as educating property owners rather than issuing citations.

Mr. Sheppard answered a citation to me would be a last resort with a property owner. What we would do is...I envision sending out a mass mailing to property owners of say three or more units as part of that letting the property owners know of our ordinances. When we get complaints or as this person is driving around the City and as he finds properties working with and trying to contact the property owner to resolve the issue and make sure that the property owner understands the ordinances that we have. If that doesn't work, then we would be issuing citations.

Alderman Guinta stated I think there is no question that this is an issue in the City. I think it is a question of what level, what priority level to provide to this issue. I look at it if I look at the choice between a Solid Waste Compliance Officer and a Police Officer I am going to choose a Police Officer. I agree with you that there is a need but I would prefer a different method before we appropriate additional funds, particularly because the funds we are looking at appropriating could be appropriated for a police officer and I see that as a more critical need.

Alderman Thibault stated first of all, Kevin, I want to say to you that I would like you to thank the guys that do it now because although sometimes it takes three or four days at least they do get to it. At least in my area and I am probably the biggest offender of calling for this kind of thing because I have an awful lot of apartment buildings in my area. I agree with Alderman O'Neil and Alderman Lopez on one condition. That we have to look beyond what they just said because what is happening is that some of these people that are moving and know that there is a problem with picking up, whether it is a washer or refrigerator or mattresses, they dump it in front of my house. I had two last week. Last week I had people that dumped two mattresses in front of my house because they have no place to put it where they are not going to be charged. I think we have to be very careful as to how we handle this and what kind of remedy we are looking for here in order to catch, if you will, everybody who is doing this. Some people...I could take you out on Douglas Street right now and show you a mess again that happened just this last weekend. I was there last week and checked it and it was fine. I looked at it this week and it was a real mess. I don't know who threw those mattresses out there or those wheels. I don't know who they are. So although we may make an ordinance and put someone in charge of trying to find out who it is, it is going to be pretty hard for that person to find out who it is if I can't even find out in my own area. I would just like everybody to be cautioned on that.

Alderman Shea stated first of all we have identified a problem, which is a step in the right direction. We really need to do something. This is an ongoing problem. It existed eight or ten years ago when Donald Dunn was in charge of the Highway. He went around and he said that one of the problems is that when he cites an owner the owner ignores the citation and then he cites them again and finally they may or may not go in front of a judge and the judge may or may not give them a fine. The point of the matter is that these people know how to work the system – those people that are violating this ordinance. So first of all we have to put more teeth into the ordinance. That is the first step. The second step is that people always talk about the quality of life and people who observe the quality of life are being violated by people who don't and people have brought out the fact that we need so much money in our budget. Well I say that we put money in our budget for different expenditures that may or may not affect the quality of life of people. This directly affects the quality of life of people. It spreads germs so it is a health issue. It denigrates the neighborhood so people's appraisal on their property is lowered. It causes young children to abuse certain things that are left behind like empty liquor bottles and things of that nature. If we can get an individual who will go around and make sure that these violators are properly prosecuted when they violate an ordinance then we would be doing a great thing. Is it worth say not \$41,000 but part of that because it was brought out that a person that would be hired would not be hired for a full year but part of a year and if we can't get enough money to plow our streets then that doesn't speak well for Aldermen and if

we can't have an individual who can go around and cite people when they violate the law or instruct them as to how to properly handle different waste materials and things then we are not protecting, in my judgement, the quality of life of people and I say we should, after a thorough investigation and after hitting upon fines for people violating, we should in fact make a move to hire someone that would do this. Thank you.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think Alderman Shea hit on something very important about quality of life. I can think over the years of some of the worst violators in the City and the only way sometimes we would get their attention...you know Highway would send out the notices and citations but we had to get the Fire Department involved because they may have piled trash including a lot of items that were flammable up against the building and all it took was somebody throwing a match. Alderman Shea touched on health issues. We have had to get the Health Department involved. This is a big issue, I think, in the City of Manchester and I again agree with Alderman Shea that this isn't a new issue. It has been around for 10 or 12 years. I think this is a move in the right direction.

Chairman Roy stated Kevin you mentioned that there are five letters per week that go out on average. Is that year round?

Mr. Sheppard responded that is an estimate.

Chairman Roy asked do we know how much fine or citation money comes in.

Mr. Sheppard answered I don't have information. That is information that we don't currently receive and that is one thing...I was actually talking to Joanne this morning that as part of this new position I would like to create a back-up for this position following through and making sure the citations were received by Ordinance Violations and paid and if they weren't paid or it goes to court or for some reason it was chosen not to pursue the citation by the Solicitor's Office for example why so that we can learn from that and pursue a lot of these are aren't going.

Chairman Roy asked as far as it being a solid waste issue, solid waste is just the job that they will be doing to clean up the City. This doesn't have anything to do with recycling and they are not going to overlap into other parts of the Highway Department?

Mr. Sheppard answered no. We see this as a full-time position.

Chairman Roy stated just so the Committee knows where I am at and I will direct this to Kevin my comments are that this is a proactive position. I think our police

officers in the room would agree that the cleaner our streets are and the better our properties are maintained the less crime we are going to have so I see this as a proactive position. What I don't like about this position is that it is going to cost us money and like some of the other Aldermen I would rather put our priorities on the street but I feel there is a balance that needs to happen. We can have all of the police out there that we want to but if they are just being reactive and not proactive then we are just pointing the City in the wrong direction. I am in favor of this position. I would ask this Committee to think about and bring up in the near future increasing the fines or increasing the citation values to \$250, \$500 and \$1,000. I do believe that if this person is doing their job they will be able to pay for their own salary through the year. I do believe, unlike Deputy Director Sheppard, that this is a policing position. Their job is to go and get the people that don't care what the ordinances say and sink their teeth into them. I believe our City is the size that we have those people. It is unfortunate but I think by being proactive we can correct it with this vote.

Alderman Guinta stated I guess I have a clarification question. How does removing a mattress on the street reduce the crime rate? I don't get the correlation.

Chairman Roy responded the cleaner the streets, the less crime we would have. As Alderman O'Neil pointed out the flammables against multi-families, the clutter in streets, our alleyways if you drive through in Alderman Shea's and Alderman Osborne's wards they are cluttered and kids are playing with beer bottles that have been out there for many, many days. We need to clean up our streets and increase our tax base, therefore, increasing property values and I think that is directly tied to litter and debris left in our streets and alleys.

Alderman Guinta asked so we are going to employ a person to teach people how to not throw garbage on the streets. That is really what I am hearing this position is coming down to as opposed to doing what is probably more appropriate in terms of addressing crime issues and hiring a police officer. This is the way I see this issue. It is a laudable goal but again look at priorities. I think there is probably a way we can work within our current framework of existing personnel to try to address this issue. If we are going to try to identify additional funds to appropriate I would much rather deal with a higher priority issue, which is the crime rate. I don't think that a Solid Waste Compliance Officer addresses that critical need. I guess that is a difference in policy between myself and other members of the Committee but that would be my comment.

Alderman Forest stated before I make my comment I want to address Alderman Guinta. It has more to do with than just a mattress on the street or a couch here and there. It has to do with a lot of the landlords who keep doing the same thing

over and over and over again. They leave their toters out for two, three or four weeks until they are told to take them off. They leave their dumpsters in one place where they can be set on fire. They cause health problems with some of the garbage they leave out and don't clear. Mainly from being a police officer and I am not saying that a police officer can't enforce the law but what I am saying is that police officers are not going to go out there and educate the public and tell landlords every time they have to move something. They are going to go out and issue a summons and drive away and then it is going to happen again. There are no teeth in the ordinance. This person here if they are hired would be going out on a daily basis. I believe that in the future there may be more than one citation officer to take care of waste. Right now we want to start with one and I think in the future there will be more than one. I don't think one man can handle the whole City but I think they are going to get the point across. That is what I have to say.

Alderman Guinta stated I would agree with Alderman Forest that there is probably not enough teeth in the ordinance. Why don't we focus our efforts in strengthening the ordinance, which has already been suggested by the Chairman? Let's be a little more proactive or vigilant in issuing the citations. I don't know if there is a process by which we could issue a warning and then if it is not cleaned up issue a citation by mail but I think there are probably other ways we could address this without appropriating funds even if it is for a three or six month period to test the program and see if it is working before we appropriate new funds for a particular officer. I don't know that this is a...I guess I would throw that out to the Committee. Is there another way we could do that in just a short-term basis – three months? Let's see what happens in three months.

Chairman Roy stated I have a question for Kevin. You stated earlier that it takes three or four days to clean up. Who is doing that clean up?

Mr. Sheppard responded there are times that we are actually going out there and cleaning that up with our own crews because what is at the curb shouldn't be at the curb and it is probably not something that you want the children or residents to be near. Quite often it is difficult to get the property owner out there but I would say there are times that we are but a lot of times we are working with the property owners to get that cleaned up.

Chairman Roy asked who absorbs the cost if your department cleans it.

Mr. Sheppard answered apparently we absorb that cost and that is one of the issues we want to talk to the Committee about. I believe we have talked to you in the past about bulky pick-up and potentially charging for those in the future and pick-ups such as that charging the property owner.

Chairman Roy asked currently that is free to any landlord.

Mr. Sheppard answered I don't want to say that is free to any landlord.

Alderman Thibault stated the thing is that the two guys that are doing it now from the Highway Department that is not really their job. This is an add-on to what their job is normally. This is why they cannot get to the whole City. I understand what you are saying Alderman Guinta and it makes a lot of sense too but the point is that the two guys we have out there now can't handle the job because it has gotten to the point where it is way beyond that. That is why I think these recommendations are coming up today. We know that these guys are filled to capacity. It takes three or four days for them sometimes to get to the problem that I have and get it picked up. The problem is...it is just like graffiti. If you don't take it off as soon as it happens you are going to get more graffiti. The same thing, I think, applies to this. The more of this you see people throw around, the more they feel they can do that if they do it then Highway has to pick it up. I think it is important that we look at the time of the two men who work at Highway right now who are doing it over and above their normal job. They are at capacity and can no longer get around the City to check out problem. This is where we are at. We are at a point where they cannot service us.

Chairman Roy stated I asked the City Solicitor to join our meeting. Deputy Solicitor Arnold, in order for this Committee to go ahead and increase the fines or the citations is that within the purview of this Committee that we could send it to the full Board?

Thomas Arnold, Deputy Solicitor, responded you can send a recommendation to the full Board. Of course those fines are written into the ordinance and it would take a Board action to do that.

Alderman Forest stated this position has been discussed before the HR Committee. The HR Committee voted 4-1 to pass it on to the Board and send it to this Committee and I think we should also pass this position with a recommendation that the full Board accept it.

Alderman O'Neil stated it is unfortunate that this became a discussion about how many police officers we have in the City. We don't meet the national average on police officers. We could put 20 more police officers on the street and I am sure they could make a difference but I don't see anyone standing up and making a motion on that and how we are going to pay for it. The issue before us right now is the quality of life and how trash in this City is ruining the quality of life in every ward in this City. Thank you.

Alderman Lopez stated I want to make it very clear that I understand the problem. I have taken a walk out there with the Mayor and other Aldermen and it is a bad problem. I am only concerned that we have no statistical data whatsoever on what has been going on. To say that we turn the citations over to the Ordinance division and they collect the money but we don't know how much money they have collected...I mean the only other thing I would like to ask the City Solicitor in reference to the job description here it says "testify on behalf of the City on legal proceedings." Do we really perceive this individual doing this or is that going beyond a job description of somebody in this category?

Deputy Solicitor Arnold replied I am not sure what your question is.

Alderman Lopez stated one of this person's responsibilities would be to testify on behalf of the City on legal proceedings.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold responded he would probably end up doing that, yes if he is out enforcing the ordinances, particularly the litter ordinances, and someone contests a citation or summons then of course we need someone to come in and testify that the litter was there and what building it was related to. I would presume that that would be this person.

Alderman Lopez stated Kevin the only other thing I don't see in here unless somebody else can pick it out is to identify garbage, for example, that is thrown in somebody else's yard. Do you perceive this individual going through that garbage and trying to find out who it belongs to?

Mr. Sheppard responded if it is on City property, I see that. If it is on private property I am not too sure the Aldermen want us to start going on to private property to take care of those issues. At that point, the Health Department...we work with the Building Department and Health Department on a lot of issues dealing with solid waste and if it is trash on private property and it is strewn about the Health Department gets involved but I am not too sure that the Aldermen want us to start going on to private property and breaking open bags to try to identify who is dropping trash on private property.

Alderman Lopez stated I have one other question and I think Alderman Shea can answer it. When he mentioned part-time, I don't understand it.

Alderman Shea replied when I mentioned part-time what I really meant to say was that the person this year would be hired within the framework of our existing budget, which is already three months in advance so what I meant was a person being hired now, although they would be a full-time employee, would not receive a full year's salary simply because they wouldn't be working in that capacity for

the length of time that is necessary. In other words, it was brought to our attention that possibly that person would not be hired if it were approved by the Board until maybe November or December so that would make that person, in my judgement, not a full term employee. I would like to add a comment. When I went to college the philosophy teacher said there are two types of information and I want to divert back to what Alderman Lopez said. There is statistical information, which is speculative information. That is in the realm of you can kind of take statistics and use them but there is practical knowledge and practical knowledge and practical information has to do with what the eye sees and what you observe first hand. Alderman Lopez said he walked around the neighborhood on Wilson Street and if he didn't see what was there then he missed that practical information because the day after we toured that there were three Highway trucks working full-time making multiple trips to the dump to pick up the garbage that was left there. If that didn't call for someone to have been around that area and looking at that particular trash or whatever you might call it and making that neighborhood more upgraded...I go by there every single day. I make it a point and it looks a lot better now than it did about two or three weeks ago. We can improve that by making the people accountable and responsible and if someone is there and that person who is working as a Compliance Officer has the time and puts the effort in, those people will think twice before putting trash out so that is a positive but those that do it will get caught and they will have to pay the price. I say we should hold their foot to the fire.

Alderman Forest moved to recommend approval of the Solid Waste Compliance Officer position. Alderman Thibault duly seconded the motion.

Alderman O'Neil asked do we need to send it to the full Board or can we send it directly to Bills on Second Reading if there are ordinance changes involved.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold answered you could probably send it both places at once. Obviously it is going to have to go to the full Board at some point.

Chairman Roy called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with Alderman Guinta being duly recorded in opposition.

Chairman Roy addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Communication from Arline Parent relative to concerns regarding yard waste collection.

Chairman Roy noted that the constituent was unable to be here and asked that is be brought up at another time. A motion to table would be in order.

On motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil it was voted to table this item.

Chairman Roy addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Update on RFP for Recycling and Yard Waste Services.

Mr. Sheppard stated as the Committee knows, I believe, at the end of June we received RFP's for our recycling and yard waste services. Four companies submitted them – BFI, Waste Management, Corcoran Environmental and Pinard Waste. Currently the Committee, which consists of Mark Roy, myself, Joanne McLaughlin, Frank Thomas, Mike Colby of the Mayor's Office and Kevin Clougherty of the Finance Department, are reviewing the proposals. We have gone back and forth with some questions for some of the companies. Our latest response we are expecting within the next few days. Hopefully this will be the last round of questioning and within the next couple of weeks we will potentially come back to this Committee to make a recommendation as to who to award those contracts to. One thing of note is the numbers for these contracts are going up. No matter who we choose or what company we work with. To keep things as is, potentially, the solid waste numbers or collection costs/contract costs there is a 30-40% increase. One item we are looking at is a weekly single stream recycling, which we feel will be effective in increasing our recycling rates. That could potentially increase the contract amounts 40%. Those are the things that this Committee is looking at. Like I said Alderman Roy is part of the Committee and he has been an active participant. Right now there is not much more to say because we are in negotiations and we are reviewing proposals so hopefully within the next two weeks we will be back before this Committee with a recommendation.

Alderman Thibault asked no matter who you contract with, if in fact for whatever reason they miss somebody and we, the City, have to go and pick it up do you charge back that company.

Mr. Sheppard answered in yard waste we have run into that situation when the contract runs out because the yard waste is at a set amount a month per year and what happens is at the beginning of the season before the contract begins or at the end of the season after the contract ends people don't realize it and they are setting the yard waste out so we have assisted in picking that up but it wasn't the contractor's responsibility. During the contract period we are not collecting yard waste or recyclables. We call the contractor and have them pick it up.

Alderman Thibault stated I have seen the City occasionally go out and pick up stuff that had been missed. I want to know does the City charge back that contractor for the time wasted or the truck or whatever.

Mr. Sheppard responded currently we don't charge back for issues like that. That is far and few between and as part of this new contract that is one of the issues we will be looking at is the process for fining the contractor for missed pick-ups, being late on collection and some of the issues that we have seen over the past 10 years.

Chairman Roy asked could you expand on that and what the current language of the contract is.

Mr. Sheppard answered I will have Joanne expand on that.

Joanne McLaughlin, Recycling Coordinator, stated when the City began recycling it was a pretty new thing in the country back in 1996 and when our contracts were written they weren't as sophisticated. The way it is written in the contract now is the contractor has 10 days to respond. I think we are a lot more sophisticated now and will put in verbiage that would not allow that to exist.

Chairman Roy stated just to...it relates more to Item 4 regarding concerns regarding solid waste pick up or yard waste pick up but the contract we have doesn't have a lot of teeth. The contracts that we are looking to do will have instead of 10 and 30 days it will be more like day of service and 24 hours. I just wanted to inform the Committee that is one thing that will provide constituent service to all of our wards that we are definitely looking at.

Mr. Sheppard stated well that is about it. Like I said hopefully we will be back within the next couple of weeks. Time is running out. The contracts run out at the end of this year and depending on who we choose there is equipment to be purchased.

Alderman Forest stated I know we were discussing thinking about raising the fines and all of that. Was there a motion made to refer to someone so it doesn't end here today?

Chairman Roy stated my suggestion was to ask the Solicitor to look at increasing the fines from \$100 to \$250, from \$200 to \$500 and from \$300 to \$1,000.

Alderman Forest moved to have the Solicitor's Office review the current fines for solid waste violations and come back to the Committee with an ordinance change.

Alderman Thibault duly seconded the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Roy stated we will be having a meeting hopefully in about two weeks so if that ordinance change could be ready for our next meeting that would be fantastic.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee